

"Rhythms of the River"

A reflection of musical growth and excellence by Cindy Barrie

On Wednesday, November 3rd, I embarked on a musical adventure of which I hoped and dreamed would be not only a wonderful learning experience, but a sharing experience as well. I was headed to Spokane Washington for the national American Orff Schulwerk Association professional development conference, "Rhythms of the River". On the way there, I had already introduced myself to, and had met several music specialists from various parts of the country. I soon found myself engaging in interesting conversations on music and the processes of sharing it with students. Although I had attended several other AOSA conferences in past years, I was still anticipating exciting new ideas to learn and bring back to my students. I attribute this anticipation to that of a child on Christmas Eve awaiting the dawn of Christmas morning and what treasures might be hidden under the tree. There were so many wonderful experiences during the conference, that I could not fit them all into ~~ten~~ pages of reflection. I will highlight only a few of the memorable ones.

Our sessions began at 8:00 AM everyday and each lasted one hour and fifteen minutes. Many sessions went into the evening hours as well. All of the sessions which I took allowed me to; play, dance, sing, and share ideas with other music specialists from all around the country. The presenters were excellent and gave me new and exciting ideas to bring home to share with my students. I took sessions that helped me grow in the areas of; cultural diversity, process, dance, movement, instrumentarium, vocal repertoire, composition, and improvisation. I am currently using several things in the classroom that I learned at the national conference, to include arrangements for instruments, as well as vocal repertoire for my honor choir and third grade students. I have an entire notebook full of ideas that will be utilized in the future, and that will impact my music classes. I am also planning on sharing several of the ideas I learned from the national conference with our local chapter, The Idaho Orff Schulwerk Association "Chapter Share" in January. I feel that as a presenter, I can share with colleagues who were unable to attend the national conference, and help teachers implement new ideas into the process of teaching the love of music to children.

Only at an AOSA national conference can a person experience musical excellence through:

- Singing in 4-part harmony with hundreds of other music teachers in tune.
- Seeing and hearing the best children's performances in the country. We were blessed to be able to support the children our own Anita Edwards, a fellow Idaho music teacher. Anita's kids performed on Friday afternoon, and we all cheered for "Idaho Kids".
- Viewing children's artwork that expresses their love for music and the arts.
- Seeing and hearing performances by musical masters such as the Paul Winter Consort.
- Playing and dancing together with Peter and Mary Alice Amidon (the masters of folk dancing)
- Enjoying the company of other music teachers from all around the country.
- Visiting vendors from all over the USA and seeing what wonderful and innovative products are the wave of the future.
- Sharing with others as we gather together for a grand Banquet to celebrate the process of music and what it means to children everywhere.

I feel that attending this conference has allowed me to grow as a musician, and as a teacher. I look forward to sharing these experiences with my students as well as colleagues. Thank you so much for allowing me to express myself through this reflection of my experience.

Very Sincerely,

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